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ABSTRACT

Principles for the design and implementation of practical training experiences for foreign students from developing countries enrolled in formal degree programs at U.S. colleges and universities are outlined. Practical training allows student-trainees to experience the application of classroom knowledge in order to strengthen their contribution to development in their home countries. Three modes of practical training were identified: supervised observation, internship, and salaried employment. In addition, several sectors of the educational community with special interest in foreign students from developing countries and key development fields were surveyed to determine their perspectives of the optimal characteristics of practical training. Their responses were presented to representatives of both the private and public sectors in the United States and in developing countries for comment and reaction. Consultants from the field of experiential education drafted preliminary principles for practical training, and these were reviewed by professionals in business, government, home country development, and education. The principles were revised on the basis of this review and are presented in their final form. In addition to stating objectives of practical training, principles for structuring practical training experiences are presented in regard to: commitment, planning, funding, locus of responsibility, training agreement, scheduling, length and duration, academic considerations, and evaluation. Operational guidelines are presented concerning: placement, supervision, relevance, communication, orientation, and compensation. Responsibilities of the following persons are also outlined: trainee, trainer, institutional coordinator, faculty monitor, sponsor, foreign student adviser, academic dean, and international program administrator. (SW)

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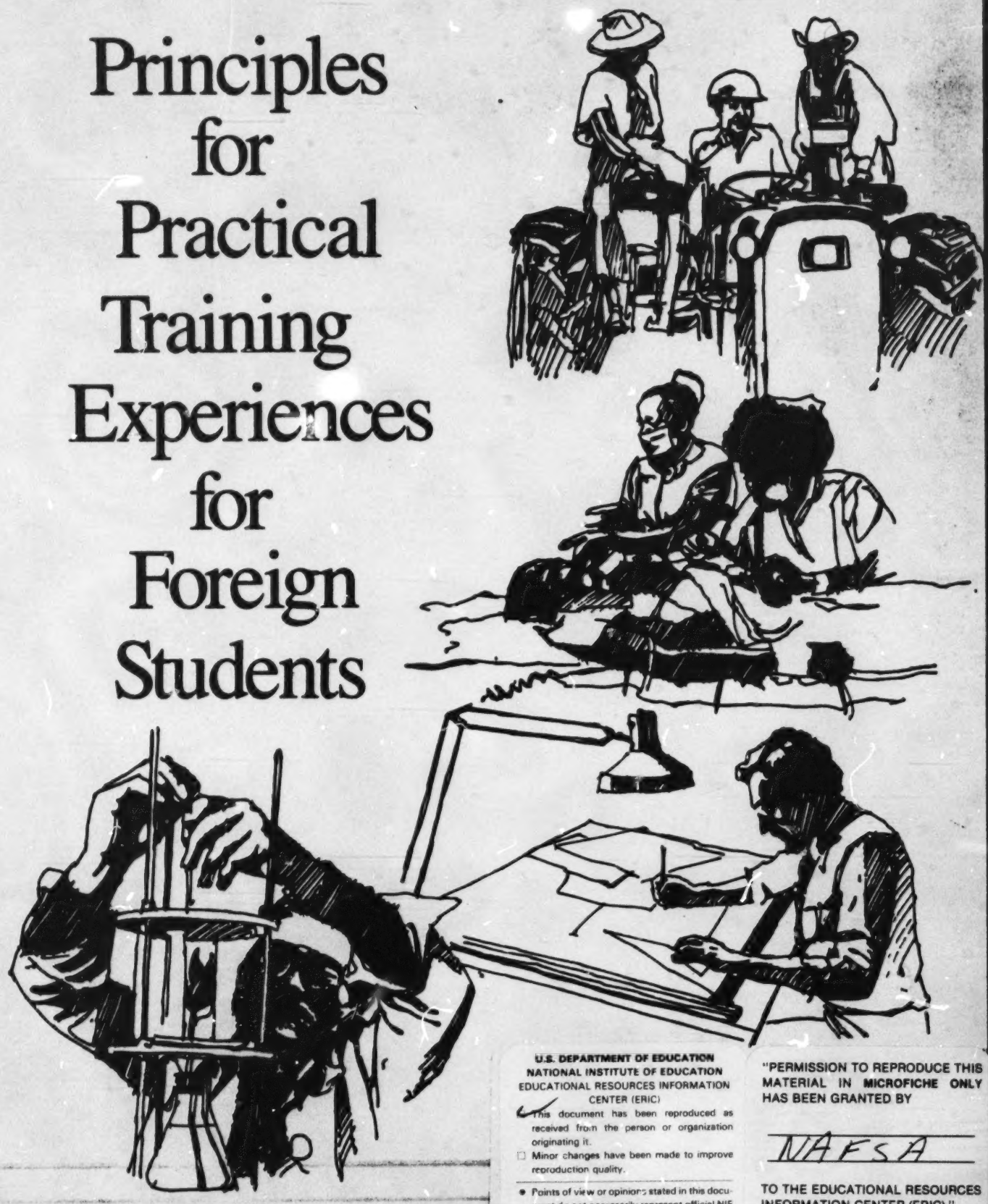

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National Association for Foreign Student Affairs

The National Association for Foreign Student Affairs is a nonprofit membership association that provides training, information, and other educational services to professionals in the field of international educational exchange. The membership is composed of more than 4,000 representatives of postsecondary institutions, school systems, community organizations, and educational associations. Members implement Association programs and participate in the determination of policies and activities through the Board of Directors and more than 35 committees, commissions, and special interest groups.

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Principles for Practical Training Experiences for Foreign Students

A comprehensive study completed in 1980 of the needs of students from developing countries studying in the United States revealed that the need least satisfied by educational programs was for practical training while in the United States.* The Office of International Training of the U.S. Agency for International Development (AID), recognizing this unmet need and reasserting its commitment to training for development in partnership with educational institutions, contracted with the National Association for Foreign Student Affairs (NAFSA) to seek a solution to this problem. NAFSA, in turn, awarded a grant to the University of Nebraska-Lincoln to conduct the Practical Training Feasibility Project.

The goal of the project was to develop principles for the design and implementation of practical training experiences for foreign students from developing countries enrolled in formal degree programs at colleges and universities in the United States. Practical training in this context provides the opportunity for student-trainees to experience the application of classroom knowledge (the integration of theory and practice) in order to strengthen their contribution to development in their home countries.

To begin work the project staff, the project advisory committee, and the project team identified three modes of practical training: supervised observation, internship, and salaried employment. Second, several sectors of the educational community with special interests in foreign students from developing countries and key development fields were surveyed to determine the optimal characteristics of practical training from their particular perspectives. Survey respondents included: (1) faculty advisers/professors in designated areas of study deemed especially relevant to students from developing countries; (2) academic deans with responsibility for teaching, research, and service in those areas; (3) administrators of international programs at the university level; (4) foreign student advisers; (5) foreign students currently engaged in practical training in the United States; (6) former foreign students sponsored by AID who have returned home to be employed by their respective governments; and (7) currently enrolled foreign students sponsored by AID. Third, their responses were presented to representatives of both the private sector and the public sector in the United States and in developing countries for comment and reaction. Fourth, consultants from the field of experiential education were called upon to draft preliminary principles for practical training. They drew upon the results of the first and second stages as well as the cumulative expertise of the project advisory committee. At this juncture it was decided to draft a universal set of principles, applicable to the entire range of practical training experiences. Fifth, the draft principles were submitted for review to a wide network of professionals in business, government, home country development, and education. The principles were revised on the basis of this review and are presented here in their final form.

Practical training is both academic and professional/vocational, encompassing a wide range of activities. A graduate research assistantship is an example of a practical training experience in an academic setting that integrates theory and practice. Numerous examples of practical training experiences can be drawn from the private sector, including a management traineeship, a pediatric residency, a construction site visit, and a psychology practicum. In each of these situations it is the combination of the "doing" with the prior or concurrent (and possibly future) classroom learning that results in truly comprehensive education for the student-trainee. The Practical Training Feasibility Project validates practical training experiences for foreign students in the United States and offers these principles to meet a need that has not been adequately filled.

Inherent in the conduct of this project has been the recognition that practical training is a valuable and integral part of the total educational experience of students from developing countries. Therefore, practical training is neither an educational luxury nor an "add-on" for students and sponsoring

* Lee, Motoko Y., Abd-Ella, Mokhtar, and Burks, Linda A., *Needs of Foreign Students From Developing Nations at U.S. Colleges and Universities*. Washington D.C.: National Association for Foreign Student Affairs, 1981.

agencies who can afford significant increments of time and money beyond the traditional degree program.

It is essential, of course, that practical training be well planned. Not only must the student, the family, the sponsor, the home country, the future employer, the academic institution, and the trainer be convinced of the merits of practical training, but they also must be prepared to underwrite the costs of the training. This underwriting may take any of several forms—the provision of funds for the maintenance of trainees who do not earn monetary compensation, the recognition of faculty members for the design/placement/evaluation of training programs, the absorption of overhead incurred in training someone who will not become a permanent employee. As a result of this joint effort, each of the participants in the practical training experience will not only derive tangible benefits but also, in the coalescence of their separate contributions, significantly enhance the development process.

In using these principles to design appropriate and creative practical training experiences, administrators must consistently keep in mind the legal parameters that currently govern students holding both the F-1 and the J-1 visa classifications, 8 *Code of Federal Regulations* 214.2(f)(6) and 22 *Code of Federal Regulations* 63.23(a)(1)(i), respectively.

The principles that follow were developed to guide, rather than to restrict, the design and implementation of practical training experiences. Training programs do not occur in the abstract; they relate to the particular circumstances of the trainee (field of study, level of study, career goals, country of intended residence), the capabilities of the educational institution, the expectations of the sponsor (either private or governmental), and the requirements of the trainer's establishment. It is obvious that good practice can be achieved in a variety of ways. Therefore, these principles, while providing a framework, should be adapted to suit individual circumstances in order to effectively meet the needs of foreign students and their home countries.

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Glossary

(The following definitions apply to these terms as they are used throughout the Principles.)

Academic dean—The person on campus responsible for administering a group of related faculty departments.

Faculty monitor—The instructor on campus responsible for providing academic guidance and supervision to the student during the course of study including the period(s) of practical training.

Foreign student adviser—The person on campus responsible for providing ongoing specialized advising and intercultural counseling services for foreign students.

Home country—The nation in which the trainee was resident before leaving to undertake studies in the United States and to which the trainee will return.

Institutional coordinator—The person on campus designated by some colleges and universities to administer all types of practical training experiences including internships and cooperative education programs.

International program administrator—The person on campus responsible for developing and administering exchange programs, contracts with foreign governments, and institutional relations across national boundaries.

Internship—A training program for academic credit with or without compensation, wherein close supervision is maintained by the faculty (e.g., working with a pharmacist as a requirement for professional licensing).

Practical training—The application of classroom knowledge in an out-of-classroom setting (e.g., supervised observation, internship, salaried employment).

Salaried employment—A training program in which the trainee is assigned responsibilities, provided compensation, and is a member of the work force (e.g., serving as engineering trainee for a private firm).

Sponsor—A person, organization, or agency providing funding for the foreign student.

Supervised observation—A training program, generally short-term and without compensation, in which the trainee views in a nonparticipatory fashion a site or operation that relates to the program of study (e.g., observing regional architecture, visiting a food processing plant).

Trainee—The foreign student engaged in a practical training experience.

Trainer—The employer organization, firm, or agency at which the training takes place.

Principles for Practical Training

OBJECTIVES

Practical training experiences should have precisely stated, attainable objectives which apply to each of the participants—trainee, trainer, faculty monitor, institutional coordinator, sponsor, foreign student adviser, academic dean, international program administrator, and the home country.

- The objectives should be incorporated into the trainee's total educational experience in the United States, integrating classroom learning and practical experience.
- The training experience should be compatible with the trainee's level and field of study.
- The training experience should harmonize as much as possible the trainee's career objectives with home country needs.
- The attainment of these objectives should be measurable.
- Each participant should contribute to, as well as benefit from, the practical training experience.
- The objectives should be reviewed periodically and, if necessary, modifications should be made.

STRUCTURE

Practical training experiences must be structured to attain the stated objectives.

Commitment

The participants should articulate and implement their commitment to practical training as an integral part of the foreign student's total educational experience.

Planning

In the earliest stages of planning a program of study, consideration should be given to the inclusion of a practical training experience.

It is essential that the trainee, trainer, and faculty monitor participate in the planning of the practical training experience.

The sponsor and the home country, to the extent possible, should participate in the planning process.

The foreign student adviser, the international program administrator, and other supportive resources should be called upon in the planning process as appropriate.

A written set of procedures should be developed for implementing practical training experiences.

Funding

The administration of a practical training experience must be adequately funded by one or a combination of the participants.

Funds for maintaining the student for an anticipated period of practical training should be allocated in the budget of the total study program.

Funding may be provided by allocation of current resources, reallocation of resources, or addition of new resources.

Provision must be made for appropriate health, accident, and liability insurance coverage.

Locus of responsibility

The administrative base should be situated in the trainee's academic department if there is no centralized office for practical training at the institution.

The trainer organization, firm, or agency must identify its own administrative base.

The existing network of on-campus and off-campus resources (such as foreign student adviser, placement office, registrar, representatives of industry and labor in the community, alumni office) should be utilized in the administration of the practical training experience.

Training agreement

There must be an explicit understanding among the trainee, trainer, and faculty monitor as to the salient elements of each practical training experience.

A written training agreement or memorandum of understanding is preferable to an oral agreement.

Scheduling

The optimal time for a practical training experience should be determined early in the trainee's academic program.

When suitable, several training experiences—rather than a single experience—should be considered.

The training should, if possible, be scheduled concurrently with the trainee's academic program.

For students pursuing more than one academic degree, consideration should be given to scheduling practical training experience between the degree programs.

Length and duration

The training period should be long enough to attain the practical training objectives.

A practical training experience must not unnecessarily delay the trainee's return home.

Academic considerations

Participation in practical training concurrent with the academic program should qualify the trainee for student status at the home institution.

The institution should attach academic value to the practical training experience when it occurs prior to graduation.

Evaluation

The objectives, structure, operational policies, and responsibilities of the participants should be evaluated periodically as they relate to particular practical training programs.

Learning which results from a practical training experience should be measurable.

OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

Operational guidelines should be developed for practical training experiences.

Placement

The placement of students in practical training experiences should be based upon an established process with adequate administrative support.

Supervision

The practical training experience guidelines should outline the responsibilities for supervision of the trainee.

The practical training experience should ensure that the trainee is guided in assessing progress throughout the training experience.

Relevance

The training experience should be adaptable to the current and future needs of the trainee's home country and to the career objectives of the trainee.

The practical training experience should correspond to the trainee's skills and abilities.

Communication

A reporting and information system should be established among the various participants in each practical training experience.

Preadmission information explaining practical training experiences and current statements in the institution's catalogs and bulletins should be made available to all eligible participants.

Sponsoring agencies should be involved in the communication system to encourage maximum use of the trainee's experiences and competencies upon return home.

Orientation

Instruction and guidance must be provided to the trainee by the faculty monitor and/or trainer concerning professional practices and protocol, ethics, confidentiality, and interpersonal relationships.

Information regarding intercultural concerns such as differences in verbal and nonverbal communication, values, behaviors, religions, and social customs should be included in orientation for trainees, trainers, and faculty monitors.

Compensation

A practical training experience should generate compensation for the trainee.

Academic compensation may be awarded in the form of course credit or fulfillment of a degree requirement when the practical training experience occurs prior to graduation.

Monetary compensation should be consistent with the institution's policies governing practical training experiences if such policies exist.

Monetary compensation should be commensurate with the trainee's experience and education and consistent with the trainer's policies governing the status and treatment of the trainees.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsibilities should be defined for each of the participants in a practical training experience—trainee, trainer, faculty monitor, institutional coordinator, sponsor, foreign student adviser, academic dean, international program administrator, and the home country.

Trainee

The trainee, the faculty monitor, and the trainer should cooperatively develop a training plan which describes the essential competencies and experiences that are to be acquired during the program.

The trainee should participate in orientation prior to the practical training experience.

The trainee should follow established procedures for participation and placement in the practical training experience.

The trainee should maintain adequate records of the experiences and competencies acquired.

The trainee must abide by occupational health and safety guidelines as set by the trainer.

Trainer

The trainer should select the trainee in consultation with the faculty monitor.

The trainer should develop the training plan in cooperation with the faculty monitor and the trainee.

The trainer should participate in orientation provided by the academic institution prior to the training experience.

The trainer must provide a safe training environment with proper guidelines as to matters of health and safety.

The trainer must orient the student to applicable procedures, policies, and professional standards.

The trainer organization, firm, or agency must designate an on-site supervisor for the trainee.

The trainer should help the student maximize experiences within the framework of the training plan.

The trainer should keep accurate records of the trainee's performance.

The trainer should be involved with the trainee and the faculty monitor in an ongoing evaluation of the training experience.

Institutional coordinator

In colleges and universities where an institutional coordinator is not designated, these responsibilities should be assumed by academic departments and/or faculty monitors.

The coordinator should inform potential trainers and trainees of opportunities for practical training and the institution's policies, procedures, and program objectives with regard to practical training for foreign students.

The coordinator should develop and maintain placement opportunities for practical training experiences.

The coordinator should maintain accurate records and contacts with past, current, and potential trainers.

The coordinator should assist in the placement of trainees.

The coordinator should plan an orientation program prior to the training experience for the trainer, trainee, and the faculty monitor.

The coordinator should facilitate communication among the participants.

Faculty monitor

The faculty monitor should consult with the trainer in the selection of the trainee.

The faculty monitor should develop the training plan in cooperation with the trainee and the trainer.

	The faculty monitor must determine the academic value of the practical training experience in accordance with the standards and policies of the institution.
	During the training experience, the faculty monitor should visit with the trainer at the training site.
	The faculty monitor should help the trainee integrate the practical training experience with educational theory.
	The faculty monitor should develop an evaluation procedure involving the trainer and the trainee.
Sponsor	The sponsor should identify home country needs that may be addressed by a practical training experience.
	The sponsor should, where appropriate, include practical training in planning for the student's total educational experience.
	The sponsor must assure that the trainee is adequately maintained during the training program.
Foreign student adviser	The foreign student adviser should keep foreign students informed of opportunities for practical training experiences.
	The foreign student adviser should continue to provide personal counseling and related services to the trainee during the period of practical training.
	The foreign student adviser should serve as a resource to the faculty monitor and the trainer on pertinent laws, regulations, and intercultural concerns.
Academic dean	The academic dean should participate in the development and publication of the philosophy and objectives of practical training for foreign students in the institution's catalogs and bulletins.
	The academic dean should commit resources for leadership, coordination, and faculty recognition in connection with practical training experiences for foreign students.
International program administrator	The international program administrator should provide institutional support for the practical training experiences for foreign students.
	The international program administrator should assist in the development of practical training experience opportunities for foreign students.
	The international program administrator should encourage the inclusion of practical training experiences when negotiating and concluding agreements with funding and contracting agencies in international development.
	The international program administrator should promote practical training experiences in contacts with the private sector and with government agencies.
Further information is available from:	NAFSA/AID Projects Director National Association for Foreign Student Affairs 1860 19th Street, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20009